

REMARKS

Claims 36-38 and 40-45 stand withdrawn as the result of a restriction requirement.

Claims 24-35 and 39 are pending for further examination.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for recognizing that claims 27 and 35 recite allowable subject matter.

Claims 24-26, 28-34 and 39 were rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,769,412 (Takemoto et al.).

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

Claim 1 has been clarified to recite moving at least one of three points frictionally engaging the banknote in a direction of intended movement of the banknote. The at least one point moves to convey the banknote against a reference surface in the intended direction of movement of the banknote.

In the illustrated example, the direction of movement is indicated by arrow 22 (Fig. 2), and the reference surface 36 (Fig. 3) against which the banknote is conveyed is oriented in the same direction.

The invention can address the problem of banknotes with low rigidity folding up when conveyed against an aligning surface rather than rotating, which can cause a jam. The inventors have recognized that if the banknote is bent during transport, the amount of the conveying force depends (at least in part) on the rigidity of the banknote. In this way, higher rigidity banknotes are conveyed against the aligning surface with more force than lower rigidity banknotes, which allows good operation with reduced risk of jamming.

In contrast to claim 1, the Takemoto et al. patent discloses a bill (S) that is moved vertically through inlet 14. The bill comes into contact with the bottom board 13 of storage chamber 10. The bottom board 13, however, is oriented perpendicular to the bill's direction of

travel (FIG. 2). Only subsequently is the bill pushed by pushing rollers 50, 60 toward the side board 11.

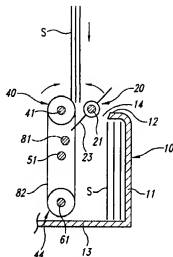


Fig. 2

Thus, the Takemoto et al. patent does not disclose each and every feature of claim 24. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claim 24 and dependent claims 25-26.

Independent claims 28 and 39 should be allowable for similar reasons. For example, claim 28 recites a conveyor having at least two surfaces arranged to frictionally engage opposite sides of a banknote so as to deform the banknote and to move so as to transport the banknote along a direction of intended movement. The conveyor includes a reference surface *oriented in the direction of intended movement*. In the event of the banknote being conveyed against the reference surface, the banknote rotates so as to be aligned with the direction of intended movement.

Likewise, claim 39 recites a banknote conveyor for conveying a banknote along a direction of intended movement. The banknote is aligned by conveying the banknote against a

reference surface *orientated in the intended direction of travel* of the banknote so that the banknote rotates.

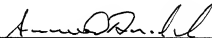
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant requests allowance of claims 24-35 and 39.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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